



MESSAGE FROM THE CALTRANS DIRECTOR

It's happening all over the country: aging roads and bridges are in desperate need of repair or replacement, but transportation funds are inadequate to get the job done.

In California, funding is worse than flat, it is actually in decline. The dramatically diminished revenue from our undependable gas tax forced the California Transportation Commission in January to propose \$754 million in cuts from its spending plan, delaying and canceling road and transit projects. These are projects sought by communities and commuters up and down the state.

At Caltrans, we are adopting new efficiencies, embracing innovation and working collaboratively with our partners, but the backlog of repairs and needs continues to grow. We estimate that California's transportation infrastructure falls \$5.7 billion deeper in the red with each passing year.

In a cruel irony, our infrastructure is in decline just as the technology of transportation is undergoing an exciting revolution. Vehicles are becoming less dependent on carbon fuels. Computers are aiding navigation and providing assistance that improves safety. Passenger vehicles are even in the early stages of driving themselves. The very concept of transportation is evolving, as more people embrace a broader range of options for getting around. But none of it, highways or transit lines, bike paths or foot bridges can reach its potential without adequate and dependable sources of revenue. Fortunately, Governor Brown has proposed a significant increase in transportation investment in his 2016-17 budget. That budget, however, has yet to gain the strong bipartisan support it needs in the Legislature. The conversation is underway. Stay tuned.

In this issue of *The Mile Marker*, we look at new ways to view our infrastructure with the advent of our [Asset Management](#) program. We examine how declining [gas tax revenues](#) will affect our ability to deliver programs going forward. We outline the hoped-for benefits of the state's first-ever [Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan](#), and we detail a pilot to study the possibility of replacing the gas tax with a road charge. The [Road Charge pilot](#) is an important study of funding alternatives, and I hope some of you will take the opportunity to participate.

I am optimistic about the future of transportation, and hopeful that we will make the smart investments in infrastructure that are crucial to our economy and our quality of life.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Malcolm Dougherty". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Malcolm Dougherty
Director of Caltrans